

Message Text

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ORIGIN NODS-00

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DRAFTED BY NEA:ARDA/HLK
APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY
NEA - MR. ATHERTON
P - MR. HABIB
S/S - MR. SEBASTIAN

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O 272344Z JAN 77 ZFF6
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 019280

NODIS
FOR CHARGES AND AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, IS, LE, US

SUBJECT: ASF DEPLOYMENT IN SOUTHERN LEBANON

1. FOR BEIRUT: YOU SHOULD MAKE THE FOLLOWING ORAL POINTS
URGENTLY TO SARKIS:

SINCE RECEIVING MR. LANE'S REPORT OF HIS CONVERSATION
WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS (BEIRUT 294), WE HAVE HAD SEVERAL
EXCHANGES WITH THE ISRAELIS AND HAVE CONVEYED TO THEM THE
REASONS FOR THE ASF DEPLOYMENT TO THE NABATIYAH AREA AS
PRESIDENT SARKIS HAS EXPLAINED THEM TO US.

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--THE ISRAELIS POINT OUT THAT THIS SOUTHWARD DEPLOYMENT
CHANGES THE STATUS QUO IN AN AREA CLOSE TO THEIR BORDER
AND DISRUPTS THE DELICATE BALANCE MAINTAINED UP TO NOW
BY ALL SIDES AS RESULT OF OUR EARLIER EXCHANGES WITH
PRESIDENT SARKIS AND WITH THE ISRAELIS ON THIS SUBJECT.

--THE ISRAELIS INITIALLY URGED US TO PRESS FOR THE WITH-

DRAWAL OF THE ASF FORCES FROM THE NABATIYAH AREA BY JANUARY 29. WE RESPONDED THAT THIS DID NOT SEEM TO US A REASONABLE REQUEST AND THEY HAVE NOW TOLD US THAT, WHILE STILL GREATLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE DEPLOYMENT, THEY UNDERSTAND THAT A CERTAIN LIMITED AMOUNT OF TIME IS REQUIRED FOR ACCOMPLISHING THE PURPOSES OF DEPLOYMENT, PARTICULARLY THE COLLECTION OF HEAVY WEAPONS.

--THE ISRAELIS HAVE THEREFORE GIVEN AN OPENING FOR A COMPROMISE WHEREBY THE ASF UNITS WOULD BE WITHDRAWN WITHIN A REASONABLY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. IF THE FORCE NEEDS SUCH TIME TO ANNOUNCE THE COLLECTION OF HEAVY WEAPONS, THE ISRAELIS SAY THEY WILL NOT OPPOSE IT OR CREATE DIFFICULTIES. THEY ARE THINKING OF A MATTER OF A LIMITED NUMBER OF DAYS.

--WE BELIEVE WE HAVE MADE CLEAR TO THE ISRAELIS THE PROBLEMS THAT PRESIDENT SARKIS HAS IN DEALING WITH THIS ISSUE; AT THE SAME TIME THEY HAVE EXPLAINED TO US THE PROBLEMS WHICH THEY HAVE AND WHICH BRING ABOUT THEIR CONCERNS.

--THE ISRAELIS REQUEST A DATE AND TIMETABLE BY WHICH THE ASF UNITS WILL BE WITHDRAWN. UNTIL THEY HAVE RECEIVED THIS INFORMATION, THEY SAY, THEY WILL BE INCREASING THEIR READINESS AND THEY WILL BE TAKING A NUMBER OF LIMITED PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES IN THE REGION.

--IN KEEPING WITH OUR DESIRE TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS NO
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MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE PARTIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED, WE ARE BRINGING THIS ISRAELI POSITION TO THE URGENT ATTENTION OF PRESIDENT SARKIS.

--IN ADDITION, WE NEED TO BE IN A POSITION TO INFORM THE ISRAELIS THAT IN THE FUTURE PRESIDENT SARKIS WILL CONSULT WITH US BEFORE CONSIDERING ANY DEPLOYMENTS OF ASF FORCES TOWARD THE SOUTH AT ANY POINT. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE ISRAELIS HAVE INFORMATION THAT SINCE OUR INITIAL DISCUSSION WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS ON TUESDAY, ASF PERSONNEL HAVE MOVED SEVERAL KILOMETERS FURTHER SOUTHEAST OF NABATIYAH.

--IT IS IMPORTANT FOR US TO BE ABLE TO CONVEY PRESIDENT SARKIS' RESPONSE TO ISRAEL BEFORE JANUARY 29. THE REASON FOR THIS IS THAT THE ISRAELI CABINET MEETS ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 30, AND THE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO BE IN A POSITION TO REPORT THAT THE PROBLEM HAS BEEN RESOLVED IN ORDER TO CALM PUBLIC OPINION AND PRESSURES FOR A

STRONGER REACTION IN ISRAEL.

--WE ARE TELLING THE ISRAELIS THAT IT IS OUR STRONG VIEW
THAT THESE EXCHANGES WITH THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES, IN-
CLUDING ANY RESPONSE PRESIDENT SARKIS MAY MAKE CONCERNING
THE ASF, MUST BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL AND OUT OF THE PRESS.

WE CANNOT, OF COURSE, GUARANTEE THAT THIS WILL BE THE
CASE.

--WE WOULD APPRECIATE A RESPONSE FROM PRESIDENT SARKIS
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

2. FOR DAMASCUS: YOU SHOULD INFORM KHADDAM URGENTLY OF
THE FOREGOING MESSAGE LANE IS PASSING TO PRESIDENT
SARKIS.

VANCE

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 27-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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